



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
24 July 2025

Original: English

---

## Eightieth session

Item 23 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

### Operational activities for development: South-South cooperation for development

## State of South-South cooperation

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution [79/236](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its eightieth session a comprehensive report on the state of South-South cooperation, including the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. Attention is drawn to solidarity and collaboration among developing countries to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as to the support that many United Nations entities provided to Member States of the global South in 2024 to help them to deal with uncertainty and shocks; address climate change and the transition to a green economy; maximize the benefits of digital transformation; and tackle the challenges of debt distress and access to financing. The report concludes with a set of recommendations on how to strengthen the roles of South-South and triangular cooperation, in the context of a changing development environment, in the five years remaining in which to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

---

\* [A/80/150](#).



## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution [79/236](#), in which Member States requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its eightieth session a comprehensive report on the state of South-South cooperation, including the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. Attention is drawn to the global context and the enhanced commitment to South-South and triangular cooperation evident in key intergovernmental processes and global agenda-setting conferences in 2024.

2. It is indicated in the report that developing countries are prioritizing collaborative, innovative and context-specific solutions in order to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. Section III contains several examples of South-South and triangular cooperation implemented with the support of United Nations entities. These examples relate to dealing with uncertainty and shocks; climate change and the transition to a green economy; the benefits of digital transformation; and the challenges of debt distress and access to development financing. Progress is also documented with respect to initiatives facilitated by United Nations entities for the purposes of measuring South-South cooperation. Section IV contains an analysis of how United Nations entities contributed to the implementation of the recommendations of the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. The examples provided relate to the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into the strategies, plans and programmes of United Nations entities; initiatives to support Member States through capacity development, sharing of knowledge and experiences, policy development, partnership-building and resource mobilization; and progress in implementing the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development. Section V is focused on efforts by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to make United Nations support for South-South and triangular cooperation more coherent at the global, regional and country levels. The conclusions and recommendations contained in section VI are aimed at strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation in order to accelerate progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The present report should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its twenty-second session, held in 2025 ([SSC/22/2](#)), which also contains several examples of United Nations support for South-South and triangular cooperation.

3. The present report is based primarily on findings from a survey of United Nations entities conducted by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and from surveys conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [75/233](#) on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

## II. Global context

4. In 2024, developing countries emphasized, at key global summits and conferences, the advancement of solidarity and progress in building on the recovery efforts from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic that had marked the preceding reporting period.

5. Progress in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States remained well below targets, although a rebound in

tourism after the pandemic contributed to growth in gross domestic product in small island developing States.<sup>1</sup> The least developed countries and landlocked developing countries were disproportionately bearing the economic losses from climate-related disasters. In the least developed countries, the mortality rate from disasters was 170 per cent higher than the global average.<sup>2</sup>

6. In its *World Migration Report 2024*, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) noted that migration showed a post-pandemic rebound but remained below the 2019 level, with flows being largely intraregional in nature (80 per cent of migrants in Asia and Africa were born within their home region).

7. The year 2024 was characterized by decisions of great relevance to the global South, including those contained in the outcome document of the Third South Summit (held in Kampala in January 2024), the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity, adopted in May 2024 (see General Assembly resolution 78/317) and the Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034, adopted in December 2024 (see Assembly resolution 79/233).

8. The Third South Summit brought together 134 States members of the Group of 77 and China, representing 80 per cent of the global population. Meeting on the theme of leaving no one behind, participants in the Summit recognized the unique needs and assets of the global South and underscored the importance of boosting South-South cooperation in areas that could propel sustained progress, such as industrialization, trade, investment, climate change, poverty eradication and digitalization. States members also called for reforms of the international financial architecture to better reflect the needs and priorities of developing countries and for fair solutions to the debt crisis.

9. During its presidency of the Group of 20 in 2024, Brazil foregrounded the priorities of the global South, including poverty, hunger, inequality, socioeconomic development, environmental protection and reform of global governance. It also provided the global South with a platform through which to amplify its voice in global affairs, including as regards strengthening South-South relations through trade. The Group of 20 also launched the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty,<sup>3</sup> which is focused on supporting the adoption of national evidence-based policies and programmes directed at reducing hunger and poverty. The Alliance accelerated momentum with respect to generating resources and knowledge for the implementation of effective public policies and social technologies to reduce hunger and poverty globally.

### **III. How United Nations entities help States to build resilience while seizing the opportunities offered by new technologies**

#### **A. Responding to uncertainty and shocks in order to accelerate progress on the Goals**

10. In the light of the trends described above, as noted in *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024*,<sup>4</sup> it is clear that the pathways to 2030 are marked by uncertainty

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “SIDS: economic situation and prospects”, *World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid-2024* (E/2024/56).

<sup>2</sup> See [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2024/2024\\_Factsheets.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2024/2024_Factsheets.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> See <https://globalallianceagainsthungerandpoverty.org>.

<sup>4</sup> *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024* (United Nations publication, 2024).

and shocks. Helping developing countries to build resilience therefore remains a priority for the United Nations development system.

11. In 2024, the technical cooperation projects of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) helped to address climate change and the transition to a green economy, as well as structural transformation through South-South peer learning and coordination of relevant industrial policies at the regional level in order to generate evidence on alternative national pathways to green economic transformation. They also helped to improve policy analysis and strategy development capacities in Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan and Türkiye.

12. The World Food Programme (WFP) played a key role in the agenda of the Group of 20 under the presidency of Brazil and in the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty. Through its innovative centre of excellence model in Brazil, China and Côte d'Ivoire, WFP enabled developing countries to share solutions in collaboration with United Nations entities. In 2024, it facilitated exchanges directly benefiting 17 countries. Also in 2024, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched South-South and triangular cooperation networks for special agricultural products to promote knowledge-sharing and technology transfer in four countries: Algeria, Cambodia, Lesotho and the Philippines.<sup>5</sup> The aim of the initiative is to help to build the capacities of smallholder farmers and local communities to mitigate vulnerabilities linked to climate change, market fluctuations and food insecurity.

13. The International Labour Organization intensified South-South and triangular cooperation efforts in 2024 across five regions. Initiatives included collaboration with Brazil and with the BRICS Plus group on the future of work and the impact of climate change in Latin America and beyond, as well as regional knowledge-sharing with China on equipping populations in South-East Asia for economic and other shocks and to build human capacities for long-term progress.

14. In 2024, United Nations entities continued to prioritize providing support to countries affected by disasters and instability. In the Philippines, IOM provided emergency and early recovery support and capacity-building for disaster preparedness. In Cameroon, IOM helped to extend a South-South cooperation programme for peacebuilding intended to develop the conflict management and resolution capacities of countries of the global South through the sharing of lessons learned by Colombia. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched a new initiative to support early warning systems and help vulnerable communities to anticipate and respond to natural hazards. The Tailored Intelligence for Actionable Early Warning Systems initiative will strengthen climate resilience in six countries, starting with Maldives and Pakistan.<sup>6</sup>

## **B. Addressing climate change and transitioning to a green economy**

15. The support provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to regional forums of environment ministers in Africa, the Arab States and Latin America promoted cooperation on the development of climate action policy,

<sup>5</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "FAO kick-starts new global South-South and Triangular Cooperation project to support the One Country One Priority Product Initiative", 23 October 2024.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "UNDP resident representative in China signs financial agreements on two new initiatives supporting early warning systems in Pakistan and the Maldives", 17 December 2024.

facilitated knowledge-sharing and supported resource mobilization in preparation for sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. As the secretariat of the tenth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, UNEP supported Member States with respect to the adoption of several decisions aimed at advancing the common positions of Africa in sessions of the Conference of the Parties and raising the ambition of Africa to reduce desertification, land degradation and drought. At the session, UNEP launched the report entitled *Natural Capital Atlas of Africa: Catalyzing the Achievement of Africa's Agenda 2063*,<sup>7</sup> providing a comprehensive, reliable and scientifically credible assessment of the state of natural resources in Africa.

16. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with pan-African institutions, including the African Union Commission, the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Development Bank, supported the African Group of Negotiators in their participation in global climate change negotiations. The support of ECA included the co-convening of the twelfth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa, which was focused on climate adaptation financing. In addition to the outcome document, the event also resulted in African common positions for the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) supported Arab States and the Arab group of negotiators in their participation in the session, providing a critical platform for negotiators to build negotiation capacity and foster regional alignment of climate priorities and positions.

17. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) co-hosted, with the Governments of Fiji, Indonesia and Maldives, an event to promote regional dialogue on ocean-based climate action at which 26 Governments and key stakeholders were able to explore opportunities for regional cooperation, leading to the launch of the Initiative for Regional Cooperation on Ocean-based Climate Action.<sup>9</sup>

18. In 2024, UNDP was tasked with leading Climate Promise 2025, which is a United Nations system-wide effort to coordinate and offer tailored support to developing countries in relation to the third round of nationally determined contributions in 2025, ahead of the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties. Ninety-eight meetings with United Nations country teams were convened in 2024, and United Nations offers of support in relation to nationally determined contributions were mapped in 61 countries, in addition to a global mapping of United Nations system offerings. Under Climate Promise 2025, countries are also supported in strengthening the coherence between their nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans, helping to make the efforts contained in the nationally determined contributions more suitable for investment, and enabling inclusive, whole-of-society approaches to their implementation.

19. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation launched the South-South Galaxy thematic database on climate action, which contains news, events and knowledge products related to climate action and more than 40 examples of good practices and solutions from the global South in relation to Goal 13. Under phase 3 of the Facility/Programme for Capacity Development for Poverty Reduction through

---

<sup>7</sup> African Development Bank and United Nations Environment Programme, *Natural Capital Atlas of Africa: Catalyzing the Achievement of Africa's Agenda 2063*, 2024.

<sup>8</sup> Economic Commission for Africa, "ECA at the 29th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP29)", available at [www.uneca.org/eca-events/COP29](http://www.uneca.org/eca-events/COP29).

<sup>9</sup> Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "Regional dialogue on ocean-based climate action", available at [www.unescap.org/events/2024/obca](http://www.unescap.org/events/2024/obca).

South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Science and Technology of the Republic of Korea and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, the Office launched three technical pilots, in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand, aimed at supporting vulnerable communities in the Greater Mekong subregion in order to strengthen climate resilience and community preparedness, demonstrating scalable models to address water security challenges. In partnership with the Bureau of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries Fund for International Development, the Office organized an event at the Summit of the Future focused on just, equitable financing and solidarity for climate action and the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in addressing the challenges associated with climate change. Discussions focused on innovative financing, technology transfer and capacity-building mechanisms for equitable climate action.

### C. Maximizing the benefits of digital transformation

20. In the Pact for the Future (see General Assembly resolution 79/1, adopted in September 2024), Member States acknowledged the potential of digitalization, new technologies and innovation for achieving the Goals and called for greater South-South and triangular cooperation to fully harness that potential. The Pact included a Global Digital Compact in which Member States underlined the need for cooperation and coordinated action to achieve an inclusive, open, sustainable, fair, safe and secure digital future for all.

21. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) launched Digitalization Day at the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, which mobilized support for digital approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen climate resilience. The Declaration on Green Digital Action was endorsed by 82 Governments and over 1,000 stakeholders from across all sectors, including civil society organizations and international and regional organizations.

22. Artificial intelligence landscape assessments were conducted with support from UNDP in five countries (Bhutan, Colombia, Montenegro, Rwanda and Sri Lanka) to assist in responsibly and effectively harnessing the potential of artificial intelligence.

23. In 2024, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the municipality of Shanghai and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China launched the Global Alliance on Artificial Intelligence for Industry and Manufacturing Centre of Excellence, marking a milestone in international collaboration and artificial intelligence leadership. The effort will facilitate the transfer of artificial intelligence and digital technologies and knowledge in order to broaden access by developing countries to such benefits as greater yields in agriculture, strengthened diagnostic capacities in healthcare and increased efficiencies in manufacturing.<sup>10</sup>

24. The United Nations regional commissions also leveraged triangular cooperation for digital transformation. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Technology Centre, in partnership with the International Chamber of Commerce and the League of Arab States, initiated a project to help to build the e-commerce capacities of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in the region.

25. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, with support from the German Agency for International Cooperation and the Federal Ministry for

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), "UNIDO, Shanghai municipality and MIIT launch AIM Global Centre of Excellence at World AI Conference 2024", 6 July 2024.

Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, launched a digital transformation lab as an experimentation and innovation space that will enable stakeholders across the region to collaborate on digital solutions.

26. ESCAP launched a 20-month project designed to bridge the digitalization and resilience gap and build the capacities of small ports in eight small island developing States in the Pacific and archipelagic countries in South-East and South-West Asia. The project involves exchanges of good practices in digitalization and disaster resilience.

27. The United Nations University Operating Unit on Policy-driven Electronic Governance, ECA and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs launched the South and East Africa Digital Governance Forum as a regional cooperation mechanism involving 18 countries. The aim is to enable mutual support with a view to building human and institutional capacities in the public sector through technical exchanges and collaborations on public sector digitalization, including the development of strategies, policies and initiatives aligned with the Goals and the Global Digital Compact.

#### **D. Measuring South-South and triangular cooperation**

28. In line with Goal indicator 17.3.1, adopted by the Statistical Commission in 2022, and with the conceptual framework for the measurement of South-South cooperation developed and agreed upon by the countries of the global South in 2024, UNCTAD coordinated a project, in collaboration with the regional commissions and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, to strengthen the capacity of developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to quantify South-South cooperation. Expert meetings and workshops were organized to enable development agencies, statistical bureaux, experts and government entities to collect and report data on South-South cooperation through their systems. A *Manual for the Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation*<sup>11</sup> was published in 2025.

29. The General Assembly requested UNCTAD, with the support of the United Nations system, to establish a platform to enable country-led development of methodologies and sharing of experience on the application of the initial voluntary conceptual framework (resolution 79/236, para. 24). It also acknowledged the importance of exploring options for the measurement of triangular cooperation (ibid., para. 25). Over 60 countries requested support from UNCTAD to start reporting South-South data. In response, UNCTAD is establishing a platform for annual meetings to enable peer exchanges in relation to South-South data.

30. In 2024, through the secretariat of the International Aid Transparency Initiative, UNDP explored the use of the Initiative's open data standard as an interoperability mechanism for South-South and triangular cooperation. A working group on South-South cooperation was established by the Initiative to explore how its open data standard could be aligned with the UNCTAD conceptual framework for the measurement of South-South cooperation, fostering standardized, transparent data-sharing across South-South cooperation partnerships.

31. The elements paper released in 2024 by the co-facilitators of the outcome document for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (Mexico, Nepal, Norway and Zambia) contains an acknowledgement of the growth of triangular cooperation and recommendations on the establishment of a triangular

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Manual for the Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation: Technical and Procedural Aspects for Pilot Testing*, 2025.

cooperation marker in reporting to complement the existing United Nations conceptual framework for the measurement of South-South cooperation.

### **E. Financing and debt distress**

32. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, many developing countries – in particular, the least developed countries and small island developing States – struggled to recover from its economic impact. The pandemic exacerbated the pre-existing Goal financing gap, mounting debt distress and narrowing fiscal space for socioeconomic investments.

33. By supporting countries in their development of integrated national financing frameworks, UNDP promoted South-South knowledge-sharing on sustainable finance. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Foundation and the Ford Foundation organized discussions on key themes of international cooperation, development-friendly debt architecture, climate finance and special drawing rights, providing a space in which middle-income countries, the least developed countries and small island developing States could share challenges and perspectives.

34. In 2024, at the eighth International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation launched the triangular cooperation window under the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation. By the end of 2024, Portugal was the only country to have contributed to the Fund (in the amount of 200,000 euros).

## **IV. Progress in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Buenos Aires outcome document, guided by the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development**

35. Data from the quadrennial comprehensive policy review surveys demonstrate that an increasing number of United Nations entities are incorporating South-South and triangular cooperation into their strategic plans and policies. In 2024, 24 of 31 United Nations entities responding to the survey incorporated those modalities into their strategic plans, compared with 19 of 26 respondents in 2022 and 22 of 27 respondents in 2023. In 2024, 73 per cent of United Nations entities integrated South-South and triangular cooperation results into their corporate reporting compared with 86 per cent in 2023. There is also evidence of enhanced support from United Nations entities in establishing or strengthening national institutions engaged in South-South and triangular cooperation. In 2024, 38 per cent of Governments responding to the survey reported receiving such support from the United Nations system compared with 31 per cent in 2022 and 35 per cent in 2023.

### **A. Continued integration of South-South cooperation into the strategic plans and programmatic work of United Nations entities**

36. In 2024, UNIDO significantly expanded its South-South and triangular industrial cooperation through strategic initiatives and regional programmes. Taking forward the operational guidelines established in 2023, UNIDO continued to implement its strengthened institutional framework for South-South and triangular cooperation for inclusive and sustainable industrial development. A major milestone

was the launch of a comprehensive e-learning course<sup>12</sup> and a toolkit<sup>13</sup> to support implementation capacity across Member States. UNIDO also strengthened its institutional partnerships by expanding collaboration with the China South-South Development Centre network.<sup>14</sup>

37. In its new strategic plan for the period 2024–2028, IOM offers a vision of how to save lives and protect people on the move and emphasizes the role of IOM as a facilitator of South-South and triangular cooperation, regional integration and interregional collaboration on migration.

38. In 2024, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) initiated the preparation of a midterm review of its South-South and triangular cooperation strategy and developed a stocktaking report covering its portfolio over the past seven years. Country-level and beneficiary data were used to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of achievements and progress. IFAD adopted a more cohesive and effective approach to leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation as important tools allowing it to drive agricultural development and rural transformation across all aspects of its work. The Fund also established a dedicated South-South unit. In 2024, five new country strategies and 14 new investment projects integrated South-South and triangular cooperation, and three new grants were approved through its South-South and triangular cooperation facility, raising the total financial allocation for South-South and triangular cooperation activities to over \$6 million in 2024.

39. South-South and triangular cooperation were further mainstreamed in 70 per cent of WFP annual country reports and in nearly 85 per cent of country strategic plans in 2024 compared with 78 per cent in 2023.

40. A dedicated web page<sup>15</sup> was curated by UNDP with relevant information on South-South and triangular cooperation. In addition, the UNDP Transparency Portal provided information on projects that leverage South-South and triangular cooperation, while its Data Futures Exchange featured data visualization of coverage of these cooperation modalities.

41. In 2024, the United Nations Children’s Fund launched a partnership guidance note on South-South and triangular cooperation that incorporates the guidance provided by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation in “Mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation: considerations for technical cooperation design, implementation and documentation”.<sup>16</sup>

42. In 2024, there were sustained efforts to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation in the country-level work of United Nations entities. Several United Nations resident coordinators took the lead in that regard, and South-South and triangular cooperation were given due prominence in the majority of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. According to the 2024 quadrennial comprehensive policy review survey, 65 per cent of United Nations country teams (73 of 113 countries) reported that South-South and triangular

<sup>12</sup> UNIDO, “UNIDO launches e-learning course on SSTIC in China”, 13 September 2024.

<sup>13</sup> UNIDO, “Collaborative industrialization: UNIDO’s toolkit for South-South and triangular industrial cooperation”, 2024.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://southsouth-galaxy.org/capacity-development-initiatives/gssdc>.

<sup>15</sup> Available at [www.sparkblue.org/dashboard/south-south-triangular-cooperation-sstc-network](http://www.sparkblue.org/dashboard/south-south-triangular-cooperation-sstc-network).

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, “Mainstreaming South-South & triangular cooperation: considerations for technical cooperation design, implementation and documentation”, available at <https://unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Considerations-for-South-South-Cooperation-Design-Implementation-and-Documentation.pdf>.

cooperation had been integrated into common country analyses and Cooperation Frameworks.

## **B. Strengthening the human and institutional capacities of Member States at the national, subregional and regional levels**

43. United Nations entities actively strengthened the human and institutional capacities of Member States at the regional, subregional and national levels through South-South and triangular cooperation, as illustrated by the following examples.

44. A platform was provided by FAO for discussions with member countries regarding new South-South and triangular cooperation resource-mobilization opportunities. FAO also emphasized efforts to develop the capacity of its staff to mainstream those modalities in agriculture policies, programmes and investment projects. In collaboration with the China International Development Cooperation Agency and the South-South cooperation fund of China, the FAO-China South-South Cooperation Programme supported initiatives in several thematic areas. For example, in Uganda, under the strategic plan for the agricultural sector, an integrated technology transfer base was established, introducing shared agricultural technologies and promoting human and institutional knowledge exchanges on crop production and aquaculture.

45. In 2024, FAO, IFAD and WFP announced a joint programme with Brazil that draws on the expertise of Brazil to help countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean to enhance their food and nutritional security through innovative country-led school feeding and family farming programmes.

46. The World Tourism Organization organized the first United Nations Tourism Africa and Americas Summit in 2024, providing a platform for cross-regional dialogue on shared challenges and opportunities in investment, cultural heritage preservation, creative industries and sustainable tourism innovation. The Summit catalysed partnerships and facilitated deeper cooperation between Africa and the Americas. It led to the establishment of a tourism centre of excellence in Zambia to provide specialized training and skills development within the tourism sector, and a culinary arts academy in Zimbabwe promoting local gastronomy to support the hospitality industry.

47. Along with UNDP, ECA supported the African Union Commission by providing a peer learning platform for African countries that facilitates the sharing of lessons learned on the implementation of national African Continental Free Trade Area strategies to improve intra-African trade.

48. Working closely with several Member States, ESCAP devised emerging development partner fact sheets, covering examples of existing cooperation agencies, to facilitate and foster partnerships for South-South cooperation and provide countries interested in engaging in development cooperation with examples of institutional structures, cooperation areas and modalities. The fact sheets cover cooperation agencies in Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Thailand and Türkiye, and are available on the South-South Cooperation Connector platform.<sup>17</sup> The Commission also convened the sixth Asia-Pacific Directors General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, co-hosted by the Governments of Indonesia and Thailand, to provide support to emerging development partners and create a network for peer support.

---

<sup>17</sup> Available at <https://sdghelpdesk.unescap.org/south-south-cooperation-connector>.

### C. Enhanced support for the sharing of knowledge and experiences among developing countries

49. The United Nations development system intensified efforts to harness its convening power and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences among countries of the global South, enabling them to gain access to, and adopt, innovative solutions and implement proven policies and development practices through collaborative approaches to shared challenges.

50. South-South knowledge exchanges were facilitated by UNDP to address a broad spectrum of issues, including poverty reduction, healthcare and well-being, gender equality and climate action. For example, its Global Centre for Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development facilitated exchanges and innovative approaches to renewable energy with several Pacific island countries.<sup>18</sup> It also supported collaboration between the Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands to enhance anti-money-laundering and countering the financing of terrorism efforts.<sup>19</sup>

51. The Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries conducted 13 technology assessments between the commencement of its operations in 2018 and 2024. In 2024, three more were initiated. The completed assessments were conducted in Africa (61 per cent), Asia (22 per cent) and the Pacific (15 per cent). The assessments identified needs in the agriculture and food, health, environment, education and energy sectors.

52. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights finalized a research project in collaboration with the University for Peace<sup>20</sup> to analyse the dynamic relationship between South-South cooperation and the right to development. It explored how the principles of the right to development can be instrumental in ensuring the success of South-South cooperation projects, and how the operational principles of South-South cooperation can contribute to the realization of the right to development and all human rights in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner. The analysis included three case studies of development projects between India and Antigua and Barbuda, South Africa and the Comoros, and Brazil and Angola. Recommendations from the project include conducting human rights impact assessments, data gathering and monitoring and evaluation of South-South cooperation activities as part of the fulfilment by States of their corresponding obligations.

53. “Learning routes” between Africa and Latin America were organized by IFAD to promote knowledge exchange in agricultural and rural development across Africa and, subsequently, across Asia and the Pacific. These structured educational journeys allowed participants to observe successful projects, share practices and engage in practical demonstrations and exchange ideas with local stakeholders. In 2024, representatives of African and Latin American farmer organizations travelled to Belize to build resilience and strengthen agricultural capacities.

---

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), “On the path to a green transformation in the Pacific: insights from regional knowledge sharing workshop on green transformation actions”, 18 December 2024.

<sup>19</sup> UNDP, “Solomon Islands to share anti-money laundering expertise with Marshall Islands counterparts in Honiara”, 13 February 2024.

<sup>20</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Good practices in operationalizing the right to development in South-South cooperation”, 2024.

54. In 2024, the United Office for South-South Cooperation revamped its knowledge-sharing and partnership brokering platform, South-South Galaxy,<sup>21</sup> to enhance its functionality, accessibility, security and user experience.

55. A data and knowledge hub powered by artificial intelligence was added to the ESCWA Arab Development Portal to provide comprehensive insights for evidence-based policymaking and decision-making to drive sustainable development.<sup>22</sup>

#### **D. Continued support for South-South and triangular cooperation policy development and dialogue among Member States and other stakeholders**

56. During 2024, United Nations entities actively supported Member States in developing policies and strategies relating to South-South and triangular cooperation.

57. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation enhanced the integration and mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation in global and regional policymaking. These development modalities were included in 39 resolutions, declarations and outcome documents, representing a 44 per cent increase from the 27 recorded in 2023. Support from the Office led to greater recognition of the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in major United Nations intergovernmental processes, including the ministerial declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development of 2024, the Pact for the Future and the Third South Summit outcome document.

58. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation collaborated to promote South-South and triangular cooperation among the respective groups of countries. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation helped the relevant institutions to mainstream South-South cooperation into the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States and the Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation developed five cases studies as background documents for the third High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation. The case studies are intended to demonstrate the efficacy of South-South cooperation in addressing the constraints of landlocked countries. In 2024, 15 projects supported by trust funds managed by the Office were implemented in small island developing States with a total budget of \$13 million.

59. The Investment Policy Reviews of UNCTAD provide an objective evaluation of countries' legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks for foreign direct investment in order to attract increased foreign and direct investment and maximize the benefits from it.<sup>23</sup> In 2024, UNCTAD released an Investment Policy Review of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, requested by the organization and prepared in collaboration with the States members of the Union.<sup>24</sup> In addition, it initiated a review of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, to be published in 2025, and provided capacity-building support to States members of the Community

---

<sup>21</sup> Available at <https://southsouth-galaxy.org>.

<sup>22</sup> Available at <https://data.unescwa.org>.

<sup>23</sup> Available at <https://unctad.org/topic/investment/investment-policy-reviews>.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Investment Policy Review of the West African Economic and Monetary Union", 1 February 2024, available in French at <https://unctad.org/publication/investment-policy-review-west-african-economic-and-monetary-union>.

on international investment agreements. The Conference provided input on the common investment agreement of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and conducted a review of the draft international investment agreement of the League of Arab States. In Asia, UNCTAD collaborated with the secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in publishing the *ASEAN Investment Report 2024*, providing in-depth analysis of the investment landscape and valuable policy recommendations for the Association's next strategic 10-year plan.

60. Support in developing a regional migration policy framework was provided by IOM to 15 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Mandated by CARICOM Heads of Government in 2019, this framework represents a transformative approach to migration governance in the Caribbean, informed by assessments of migration governance indicators carried out with IOM support.

61. The World Tourism Organization provided technical assistance to the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala and Zambia to establish or evaluate sustainable tourism policies and legal frameworks tailored to promote adventure tourism and investment.

62. Contributions were made by ESCWA to the development of more than 15 policy documents in member States, with a focus on transferring global and regional best practices in information and communications technology security (to Djibouti, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, as well as the State of Palestine), artificial intelligence (to Iraq and Mauritania), cloud computing (to Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic), and blockchain and digital inclusion (to Jordan). Other policy areas in which ESCWA was active included social justice (for example, the national strategy for social justice in Libya for the period 2025–2027 and the national strategy for ageing in Somalia).

63. The Data to Policy Network was established by UNDP, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the German Agency for International Cooperation, focused on building the capacities of policymakers to use available data to design and implement policies. Another aim behind the initiative was to test new collaborative approaches to addressing complex development challenges, including poverty and climate change.

## **E. Progress in partnership-building and resource mobilization**

64. The examples below demonstrate that, by strengthening partnerships among countries of the global South, the United Nations system helped to bolster in-kind support and financial contributions that supplement other forms of development financing.

65. Over \$10.9 million was raised by WFP from countries of the global South for South-South and triangular cooperation projects, including from the private sector, and for the South-South and triangular cooperation Innovation Challenge, the aim of which is to showcase innovative and country-owned solutions from the global South in support of Goal 2 (Zero hunger). For example, two of the winning innovations (a digitalized drought early warning system from Kenya and the Solar 4 Resilience initiative from India) were aimed at building the capacities of vulnerable communities to anticipate drought and scaling the use of affordable solar-based food processing technologies as a form of climate action.

66. Multi-stakeholder partnerships were facilitated by ITU through such platforms as the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition, providing developing countries with access to expertise, resources and collaborative frameworks that amplify the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation. ITU matched funding from developed

countries with the needs of developing countries and supported the conceptualization and implementation of innovative South-South and triangular cooperation through innovation challenges, including with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. The ITU Global Innovation Forum brought together high-level officials from Governments, the private sector and the United Nations system.

67. A project on attracting finance and investment for the energy transition in Africa was launched by UNCTAD, with the aim of helping Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania to strengthen their capacity to promote and facilitate investments for energy transition through peer learning and the sharing of best practices.

68. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) funded South-South and triangular cooperation projects in 22 countries in the Caribbean, Central America and South America and supported the resource mobilization efforts of countries and the development and implementation of initiatives funded by South-South and triangular cooperation funding mechanisms, including the India-United Nations Development Partnership Fund (Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Paraguay and Trinidad and Tobago) and the Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean of the German Agency for International Cooperation. With a view to better positioning health on the agendas of subregional integration organizations, PAHO strengthened its collaboration with such organizations as CARICOM, the executive secretariat of the Council of Ministers of Health of Central America and the Dominican Republic, the Southern Common Market, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and the Andean Health Organization – Hipólito Unanue Convention.

69. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States organized the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network Forum on the margins of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, focused on partnerships for resilient island economies and strengthening private sector engagement in implementing the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States.

## **V. Ensuring coordinated and coherent United Nations support for South-South and triangular cooperation**

70. At the Third South Summit, States members of the Group of 77 and China recognized the role of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as the coordinator of South-South cooperation in the United Nations system and called for further initiatives to be implemented by the Office, as well as the regional commissions and other United Nations entities, within their mandates, in support of developing countries. The Summit also resulted in a commitment to supporting the United Nations development system and the resident coordinator system “to deliver better in support of programme countries and their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda”.<sup>25</sup>

71. In 2024, as the programme responsible for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and its main source of funding, UNDP contributed approximately \$6 million to the institutional and programmatic budget of the Office.

72. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation continued to coordinate the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (comprising over 40 United Nations entities), monitor the

<sup>25</sup> Available at [www.g77.org/doc/3southsummit\\_outcome.htm](http://www.g77.org/doc/3southsummit_outcome.htm).

implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development in the period 2020–2024, and report on progress in that regard. In addition, the Office facilitated the sharing of models for the institutionalization of South-South and triangular cooperation by United Nations entities through the Inter-Agency Mechanism and provided a platform to improve the coherence of system-wide efforts with respect to South-South and triangular cooperation.

73. As part of the regional peer support group mechanism in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation organized webinars for resident coordinator offices, United Nations country teams, peer support group members and regional commissions in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Africa. It provided advice and quality assurance to seven United Nations country teams (China, Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda, Indonesia, Mexico, Timor-Leste and Uruguay) during the preparation of their respective Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and during the preparation of the multi-country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean (2027–2031), to enhance the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives.

74. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation developed an e-learning module on the use of South-South and triangular cooperation to accelerate transformation for sustainable development<sup>26</sup> for United Nations country teams and the United Nations development system at the regional level. This e-module is the product of a collective endeavour involving substantive input from over 20 United Nations entities; guidance from the Development Coordination Office on alignment with United Nations planning frameworks; financial support from FAO, PAHO, the United Nations Population Fund and WFP; and the training expertise of the United Nations System Staff College. The module is a comprehensive guide with real-world case studies and innovative examples that will help the United Nations to support national partners in their South-South and triangular cooperation efforts. The Office also developed guidance for United Nations agencies on integrating South-South cooperation at the project level.

75. As a member of the United Nations inter-agency task force on the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation is working closely with United Nations partners to develop its monitoring and evaluation framework, with a focus on international cooperation, partnerships and financing. For the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, the Office compiled case studies in which it examined examples of South-South cooperation in the five areas covered by the Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034.

76. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation launched the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Solutions Lab, which is a global and open platform designed to enhance the capabilities of developing countries to test and incubate innovative South-South and triangular cooperation solutions and policies in order to address emerging challenges. With support from the International Atomic Energy Agency, WFP, the Economic Commission for Europe, Masdar City (United Arab Emirates) and the Gulf Organisation for Research and Development, the Lab will focus on renewable energy and green growth, financial inclusion and financial technology (fintech), agricultural productivity and food security, technological innovation and entrepreneurship, and the building of digital skills for inclusive digital

---

<sup>26</sup> Available at <https://unsouthsouth.org/our-work/capacity-development/sstc-e-module>.

transformation. At the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Baku, the Office launched the first global Innovation Challenge, in which entrants submitted solutions and competed for support.

## **VI. Conclusions and recommendations**

77. Developing countries demonstrated their continued commitment to South-South and triangular cooperation as important approaches for accelerating progress towards the achievement of the Goals. This was evidenced by several intergovernmental cooperation frameworks adopted in 2024 that highlight the role of such cooperation. As developing countries increasingly prioritized collaborative, innovative and context-specific solutions, there also was a push to integrate South-South and triangular cooperation into the policies, plans, programmes, institutional structures and budgets of United Nations entities. In addition, United Nations entities mainstreamed such cooperation in country programmes and at the project level. Furthermore, they augmented their support to Member States through capacity development, the sharing of knowledge and experiences, policy development, partnership-building and resource mobilization. With the clock ticking for the achievement of the Goals, the United Nations system will need to intensify its support for the efforts of Member States, including through South-South cooperation.

78. In line with the mandate established in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Second Committee, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and other United Nations entities will continue to deepen efforts aimed at mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation at the country level. They will also redouble their efforts to provide demand-driven advisory and technical support to United Nations resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to leverage such cooperation through Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and the country programmes of individual United Nations entities. In this regard, United Nations entities will need to strengthen staff capacities.

79. The role of South-South and triangular cooperation as important means of achieving the Goals through partnerships, knowledge, technology and financing has been highlighted in the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States and the Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and other United Nations entities, will need to continue to operationalize the mandate and commitments set out in these documents by tailoring their strategies and plans to ensure that South-South and triangular cooperation are well leveraged.

80. In the Pact for the Future, adopted in September 2024, Member States recognized the potential of digitalization, new technologies and innovation for achieving the Goals and called for greater South-South and triangular cooperation to build capacity; improve access to science, technology and innovation; and increase resources for the implementation of technical and scientific initiatives. In the Pact, they encouraged multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaboration among universities, research institutes and the private sector to accelerate digital knowledge development and enhance access to research capacity. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and other United Nations entities must continue to initiate and nurture such initiatives as the South-South Global Thinkers platform, the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Solutions Lab and the Innovation Challenge, which support the replication of successful solutions through South-South and triangular cooperation.

81. The United Nations regional commissions will continue to support the efforts of pilot countries in order to encourage the use of the conceptual framework for the measurement of South-South cooperation and supporting developing countries through capacity development, peer learning and the deployment of data collection tools under the leadership of UNCTAD and with support from the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. This initiative also requires close engagement and collaboration with the United Nations country teams that collaborate with country development cooperation entities.

82. In its resolution [79/236](#), the General Assembly acknowledged the importance of exploring possible options for the measurement of triangular cooperation. A review of the possibility of a triangular cooperation marker is suggested in the elements paper prepared for the draft outcome document of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.

83. Financing South-South cooperation initiatives requires a concerted effort by United Nations entities and Member States to diversify and engage a range of partners, including international financial institutions, regional and subregional development banks and the private sector. Member States need to continue to explore and expand innovative and sustainable funding and financing mechanisms to support South-South cooperation initiatives and ensure their long-term viability, including blended finance models, public-private partnerships and dedicated South-South and triangular cooperation funds to ensure adequate resources for collaborative projects.

84. Progress has been made in promoting triangular cooperation, including through the establishment by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation of the triangular cooperation window under the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation. It should be noted, however, that the contributions to this fund remain limited. Member States and partners from the development and private sectors are encouraged to contribute to this Fund so as to enable developing countries to continue to source, and gain access to, a broader range of resources, expertise and capacities with a view to implementing the 2030 Agenda.

85. Following recommendations by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2018 and in the light of the persistent shortcomings of the rules of procedure of 1980 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation to address changes that have taken place during the evolution of technical cooperation among developing countries and South-South cooperation, the Office will need to explore means to review the rules of procedure, including reports to Member States, as secretariat of the High-level Committee and with support from the relevant departments in the United Nations and UNDP.